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Draft country programme document**

Philippines

Summary

The Executive Director presents the draft country programme document for the Philippines for discussion and comments. The Executive Board is requested to approve the aggregate indicative budget of $11,570,000 from regular resources, subject to the availability of funds, and $32,000,000 in other resources, subject to the availability of specific-purpose contributions, for the period 2005 to 2009.

* E/ICEF/2004/8.

** In accordance with Executive Board decision 2002/4 (E/ICEF/2002/8), the present document will be revised and posted on the UNICEF web site in October 2004, together with the summary results matrix. It will then be approved by the Executive Board at its first regular session of 2005.

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Basic data *(2002 unless otherwise stated)*	
Child population (millions, under 18 years)	33.9
U5MR (per 1,000 live births)	38
Underweight (% moderate and severe, 1996)	28
Maternal mortality ratio (per 100,000 live births, 2000)	200
Primary school enrolment (% net, male/female, 2000)	92/93
Primary school children reaching grade 5 (%, 1999)	89
Use of improved drinking water sources (%, 2000)	86
Adult HIV prevalence rate (%, 2001)	<0.1
Child work (%, children 5-14 years old, 2000)	11
GNI per capita (US$)	1 020
One-year-olds immunized against DPT3 (%)	70
One-year-olds immunized against measles (%)	73

The situation of children and women

1. The Government continues to be very committed to promoting the rights of children, including through major laws, such as the law on early childhood care and development, and through the activities of the Council for the Welfare of Children and its member agencies. New legal instruments have been put in place for the protection of children, including a Juvenile Justice Bill, which among other provisions raises the age of criminal liability from 9 to 12 and emphasizes prevention of juvenile offences, and the Anti-Trafficking in Persons Act. However, while the legal frameworks are largely in place in support of the rights of children and women, implementation is mostly weak.

2. The second report of the Philippines to the Committee on the Rights of the Child was submitted in 2003 but has not yet been reviewed. The third report is due in 2005.

3. In parts of the country, children continue to be affected by localized conflict between the national army and insurgents, with an estimated 50,000 children displaced. There is, however, a positive outlook for peace negotiations with the two groups, the Moro Islamic Liberation Front and the New People's Army.

4. One of the main health achievements has been a reduction in the under-five mortality rate (U5MR), from the estimated 48 (per 1,000 live births) in 1998 to 40 in 2003, according to recent estimates. However, little improvement is noted in the maternal mortality ratio (MMR), which remains high due to causes that include iron deficiency anaemia, post-partum haemorrhage, hypertension and complications during delivery and abortions. The country has been regionally certified polio free since 2000. Immunization rates for diphtheria, pertussis and tetanus (DPT3) and measles, however, are no higher than 70 per cent. Malnutrition remains high, with the greatest prevalence recorded in one- to two-year-olds, largely due to improper feeding practices. Among children under five, a 2001 survey indicated stunting prevalence at 31 per cent, underweight at 31 per cent, and wasting at 6 per cent.

5. Wide disparities exist between national statistics and those of the provinces. For example, the national figure for the infant mortality rate is 29, whereas in Northern Samar it is 79. The MMR in Maguindanao is 334, compared with the national figure of 200. The U5MR in Mountain Province is 90, compared with the national figure of 38, according to Government statistics.

6. While in 2000 the country enjoyed near universal primary school enrolment, estimated to be 97 per cent of primary school-aged children, the 2002 estimate of 94 per cent indicates a deteriorating situation. The proportion of children staying in school to grade six is 63 per cent nationally, according to recent estimates, whereas in the relatively poor Maguindanao, Sulu and Cotabato provinces, it is 23 per cent, 26 per cent and 44 per cent, respectively, according to statistics of the Department of Education.

7. Natural disasters are also a cause of concern. While the risk from earthquakes is considered low, the country is severely affected by volcanic eruptions, floods and typhoons, which often cause landslides. In the last decade, 53 typhoons and 23 major floods affected the lives of over 8 million people and resulted in over 11,000 deaths.

8. The country has approximately 33 million children, who make up 43 per cent of the population. Large numbers of children require protection from abuse and exploitation. There are approximately 250,000 street children in the 22 major cities, and they are exposed to crime, drugs, physical abuse and sexual exploitation. Since many parents seek overseas employment or employment in the cities, large numbers of children live without one or both parents. Child labour is widespread, encompassing almost 4 million children aged 4 to 12 years old, around half of them toiling in hazardous labour.

9. While HIV/AIDS prevalence has been low and slow-growing, it is clear that conditions exist for a rapidly expanding problem. Low condom use, low perception of risk and unhygienic use of needles for injecting drugs are all worrisome factors. The 2002 Young Adults Fertility Survey indicated that approximately 34 per cent of sexually active youth, mostly males, have multiple partners. It also indicated that 20 per cent of males have paid for sex, and of these only 31 per cent have used a condom. Underlying these statistics are disturbing misconceptions held by youth, of whom 23 per cent believe that AIDS is curable and 60 per cent believe that they will not become infected.

Key results and lessons learned from previous cooperation, 1999-2003

Key results achieved

10. The last country programme, spanning 1999 to 2003, with a one-year extension covering 2004, introduced the concept of encompassing all elements of programme development and implementation within a child-friendly movement. The movement, which continues to be a centrepiece of Philippines-UNICEF cooperation, addresses all key issues throughout a child's life. The concept has helped to focus attention on the rights of children and place children on the development agenda in ways that extend beyond the "focus" areas — cities and provinces given the highest priority. Based on this concept, a number of initiatives were developed and pilot-tested,

especially in education and policy. Scaling-up began during the latter half of the programme cycle.

11. Many local governments are also adopting the "four gifts for children" strategy, which includes, at the local level, a development plan, an investment plan, a legal code and a report on the state of children. By December 2003, 56 out of 194 provinces and cities had adopted and implemented these local development plans for children, and 36 also enacted local codes for children. In the focus areas, almost all 24 local government units adopted and are implementing the "four gifts".

12. Education in the focus areas has shown good results. From 2000 to 2003, when enrolment rates in Government-run schools fell by 3 per cent nationally, they fell somewhat less in focus areas. Moreover, the proportion of children staying in Government-run schools until grade six is now higher in focus areas than in the nation as a whole, having risen in 2000-2003 from 55 per cent of children to 73 per cent, compared with a rise from 63 per cent to 71 per cent nationally. This is a significant achievement, considering that the focus areas are remote, have problems of conflict and violence, and encompass many disadvantaged communities. These figures indicate that the child-friendly school system and student tracking system, introduced during the most recent programme cycle, are gaining momentum. In focus areas, UNICEF resources helped to train more than 1,800 day-care workers and 1,000 primary school teachers in early childhood care and development. Furthermore, in these areas, some 3,500 schools, 41 per cent of the total, adopted the child-friendly school approach.

13. The child-friendly programme has made a considerable impact in child protection, and in this area UNICEF has played a strong advocacy role. To begin with, the programme influenced the Supreme Court to adopt new child-sensitive rules and procedures, which include the use of video-conferencing in special studios to spare children the trauma of testifying in open court. To date, 14 child-friendly studios have been established. In addition, extensive child-friendly training on rights has been completed in the justice system, and a juvenile justice training manual was published, with UNICEF assistance. Awareness about child rights was also promoted through the establishment of 45 child knowledge centres and a youth reporters bureau for television, which UNICEF has supported with training, equipment and advocacy. Also developed were child-friendly instruments for municipal and provincial *barangays* (local government entities) to help them assess their protection of all children's rights. In addition, more than 5,000 children at risk received educational assistance that included books and writing materials, with allowances given to informal education teachers and facilitators. Some 3,000 children received information on HIV/AIDS and sexually transmitted infections as well as life-skills training.

14. Several notable advances were made in child health. A Child Health 2025 Policy Framework was approved, which includes national plans for safe motherhood and adolescent and youth health and development. Also completed were technical guidelines for vitamin A and iron supplementation. The programme played a key role in activities to reverse falling immunization rates, which had declined from 73 per cent to 70 per cent between 1998 and 2003. This trend was due to a change in the procurement system made by the Government, which UNICEF helped to adopt a more reliable system. Through nationwide campaigns supported by the country programme, coverage with vitamin A supplementation rose from 83 per cent in 1998

to 93 per cent in 2003, according to the Department of Health. In 2003, following a massive salt iodization campaign, accessibility and utilization rates for iodized salt reached 90 per cent and 60 per cent, respectively. In 2002, these levels were 35 per cent and 30 per cent.

Lessons learned

15. Various studies, the mid-term evaluation and the annual programme implementation reviews have all indicated that a multisectoral, integrated approach to programme planning and implementation adopted within a child-friendly movement has rallied many actors in and outside Government to work towards improving the lives of children and women. This is especially noteworthy considering the complex decentralized environment of the Philippines and the amount of available resources.

16. A review of progress in September 2003 indicated that while the child-friendly movement is well understood and widely adopted by cities, the movement had greater impact in the provinces. This was attributed to the fact that the cities involved received relatively small financial input from the programme (compared with their own resources) and have large bureaucracies. In the future, UNICEF will work to mobilize the cities' own resources for children and work more closely with non-governmental organizations (NGOs) to increase the programme's reach and impact.

17. Moving the child-friendly movement forward entails focusing on the health and well-being of children in high-priority areas to reduce disparities. This task will require more resources than are currently available for the programme. The next country programme of cooperation with the Philippines will therefore need to tap new resources by working with other partners in focus areas, including the Japan Bank for International Co-operation (JBIC), the Australian Agency for International Development (AusAID), the Asian Development Bank (ADB) and the World Bank as well as other United Nations agencies (especially through the United Nations Development Assistance Framework, or UNDAF) and NGOs.

The country programme, 2005-2009

Summary budget table

	In thousands of United States dollars		
Programme	*Regular resources*	*Other resources*	*Total*
Communication	1 561	3 218	4 779
Local policy and institutional development	1 928	822	2 750
Health and nutrition	2 228	10 745	12 973
Education	1 545	5 957	7 502
Child protection	1 342	8 451	9 793
HIV/AIDS	1 076	1 918	2 994
Cross-sectoral costs	1 890	889	2 779
Total	**11 570**	**32 000**	**43 570**

Preparation process

18. Development of the country programme was based on the CCA and UNDAF. The Government, UNICEF and NGOs participated in an UNDAF meeting in October 2003, where UNDAF priority areas were agreed. Sectoral evaluations were conducted during the second half of 2003, and a study to assess the effectiveness of the child-friendly movement was completed in early 2004. Consultations were also held with major donors, AusAID and New Zealand Aid, and a dialogue developed with JBIC and ADB. A draft programme outline was discussed by the Government /UNICEF Executive Committee in early January 2004, following which the UNICEF regional office provided in-country support to finalize strategies.

19. Results from a 2002 meeting to develop a new vision were also incorporated into the draft programme outline, which was presented and discussed at a National Steering Committee meeting in February 2004. This meeting brought together senior Government officials, the UNICEF Regional Director and representatives from the World Health Organization, the United Nations Development Programme and the United Nations Population Fund. Children and youth participated in the development of a National Plan of Action for children and a Child Participation Framework plan, both of which were taken into account in developing the programme.

Goals, key results and strategies

20. The UNICEF-Philippines country programme of cooperation for 2005 to 2009 will aim to reduce the disparities among children in national and focus areas, as evidenced by major health, nutrition, education and protection indicators, by at least 50 per cent of their 2003 national levels. The programme will continue to promote the child-friendly movement in achieving measurable results for the most disadvantaged children. The programme will be implemented in the 19 focus provinces and 5 cities that participated in the previous programme (the provinces will not include Tawi Tawi).

21. Multi-year, integrated plans will target the worst areas of disparity. These will facilitate collaboration with other actors, including other United Nations agencies, and will assist the provinces in allocating counterpart funds. A major change in strategy will entail paying more attention to leveraging resources for children in focus cities and to working more closely with NGOs.

22. Interventions will cover six programme areas, all of which will mainstream issues of gender and develop HIV/AIDS interventions. The programme will aim to achieve these key results: the improved protection, health and well-being of children and women in focus areas; improved basic social services; more effective policies for children at local and national levels; strong communication for, and awareness of, children's rights; better achievement at school; and a renewed focus on preventing a major HIV/AIDS epidemic.

23. UNICEF regular resources will be used to sustain the child-friendly movement and to continue to build capacity for early childhood care and development among as many local governments, communities and households as possible. Other resources will be used to accelerate and expand the movement and to develop activities with NGOs. Without significant other resources, the programme is expected to achieve limited expansion and merely to sustain gains already made.

Relationship to national priorities and the UNDAF

24. The Early Childhood Care and Development Act and Child 21 (the national framework for plans, policies and programmes for children) are helping to guide the country programme development and implementation. The programme will continue to work with, and strengthen, the Council for the Welfare of Children to implement the Early Childhood Care and Development Act.

25. The UNDAF has been completed and these five priority areas identified: (a) macroeconomic stability and equitable development, (b) basic social services, (c) good governance, (d) environmental sustainability, and (e) conflict-prevention and peace-building. The UNICEF programme will participate in all five priority areas as well as other areas for collaboration indicated by the UNDAF. Development of the UNDAF created many opportunities for the United Nations agencies to work closely together and it greatly strengthened respective understanding of how each agency plans and works. The common country assessment (CCA) and UNDAF also enabled the United Nations agencies to work more closely with the Government and NGOs. Collaborative efforts will be developed through joint planning and monitoring exercises and joint field visits.

Relationship to international priorities

26. The programme emphasizes all priorities in the UNICEF medium-term strategic plan (MTSP) and will focus in particular on early childhood development. In education, a focus will be placed on improving quality, achievement and school retention. Attention will be given to the *madrassas* (faith-based schools) where girls are at a disadvantage. In HIV/AIDS, preventive action will form the core of efforts. The Health and Nutrition programme will sustain efforts in salt iodization to meet the 2005 goal. Immunization will also continue to be a priority, and UNICEF will assist the Government to obtain vaccines through reimbursable procurement to ensure uninterrupted deliveries. Child protection will focus on preventing trafficking, which is a regional priority, as well as improving the policy and judicial environment for children. As an overarching strategy, the programme will address the imperatives of the Millennium Declaration and Development Goals and the goals of *A World Fit for Children*.

Programme components

27. Six sectoral programmes will address children's rights and well-being within a rights based approach.

Communication

28. The programme will aim to promote the widest possible awareness and discussion of child rights through the child-friendly movement. The *ChildInfo*-based Knowledge Network Centres will be expanded to reach half of all provinces and cities. The News Network half-hour television programme written and directed by children will be expanded through an alliance developed by UNICEF with NGOs, broadcasters and child protection organizations. This programme is expected to broadcast information about child rights to at least 250,000 people 26 or more times per year. Another initiative, promoting communication for behaviour change, will produce at least 150 communication materials on health, education and child protection, with communities participating in message design and delivery. In

addition, the country programme will work with industry councils and associations, providing training and advocacy for journalists and other media professionals on developing child-friendly media and on improving compliance with standards developed for children's media. Continuous advocacy with the Government for child- rights based policies will emphasize the adoption and implementation of a comprehensive juvenile justice law. Partnerships with new broadcasters, the private sector, NGOs, journalists and faith-based organizations will be developed to promote children's rights as widely as possible.

Local policy and institutional development (LPID)

29. Efforts will go towards ensuring that an additional 8,500 *barangays* become child-friendly in order to achieve complete child-friendliness in focus areas. Efforts will continue to expand the child-friendly movement beyond focus areas, in order to ensure that children's rights are placed on the agenda at local and national levels. The aim is to expand the movement to an additional 41, or 70 per cent, of non-focus provinces and 77 additional cities in these provinces, all of which would adopt the 'four gifts for children' by 2009. The LPID will interact closely with local governments and the leagues of local government units, cities and municipalities to promote the four gifts and ensure their implementation by leveraging Government resources. Major partners in this effort will be the Council for the Welfare of Children, the Department of Interior and Local Government, the National Economic Development Authority (NEDA) and the Regional Sub-committees for the Welfare of Children. The LPID will also promote and support emergency preparedness and child rights as part of local plans for children and help develop interventions to raise awareness about HIV/AIDS at the local government level. Closer collaboration will be pursued with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) on governance and child rights issues, and with ADB, the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and the World Bank on complementary governance projects. Work on policy and institutional development regarding child labour will take place in cooperation with the International Labour Organization (ILO).

Health and nutrition

30. The aims are to achieve and sustain full immunization coverage of over 90 per cent; to achieve universal salt iodization by 2005, with salt utilization of 85 per cent; reduce under-nutrition in children by 30 per cent from 2003 levels; reduce the maternal mortality ratio from the current level of 200 and reduce disparities relating to infant and under-five as well as maternal mortality. The programme will continue to support the national immunization programme, surveillance of polio eradication, measles elimination by 2008 and the elimination of maternal and neonatal tetanus. In the achievement of national health goals, priority will be given to reducing disparities, improving the care provided by families and communities and encouraging the adoption of health-promoting behaviours. More attention will be paid to pre-pregnancy, pregnancy and the lactation period for women, and to the health and well-being of children under three. The programme will also tackle under-nutrition in women of child-bearing age, iron-deficiency anaemia for children and women, and stunting and low birth weight. Strong advocacy for improved emergency obstetric care will be undertaken and new models developed for community-based nutrition support. A programme will be introduced of de-worming

linked to school hygiene and sanitation and to vitamin A supplementation. Childhood injuries will receive attention in new studies to be completed. Regarding emergencies, preparedness for health and nutrition support will be pursued with local authorities and NGOs. On HIV/AIDS, the focus will be on injection safety, counselling for adolescent girls and women, the safety of the blood supply and the prevention of parent-to-child transmission. Collaboration will be strengthened with the United Nations Population Fund for adolescent and maternal health, with the World Health Organization (WHO) on immunization and other health issues, and with UNAIDS. Other health-sector partners include Helen Keller International for vitamin A supplementation, USAID for salt iodization and food fortification, and the World Bank for a programme on safe motherhood.

Education

31. In pursuit of Education for All goals, the programme will help raise early childhood development for children three to five years old, reverse the drop in enrolment rates, sustain and enhance the gains made in raising retention rates, improve student achievement and sustain the high rates of girls' enrolment and retention. The programme will popularize the child-friendly school system and student tracking system in focus areas and will support expansion to new areas and to the secondary level. Intensive training for teachers and school heads will be provided and will include orientation for parent-teacher associations and school boards. Within the Early Childhood Care and Development law framework, the programme will continue to support the expansion of day-care centres. Emphasis will be placed on offering more home and community-based early childhood centres. Monitoring and evaluation systems will be strengthened to improve education and parent and community participation. The programme will also work closely with the Council for the Welfare of Children and the Department of Education in enriching the curriculum. To address the wide disparities that characterize access and achievement rates, especially in the Mindanao region, the programme will assist in strengthening the madrassa education and alternative-delivery systems. Activities will address the education needs of children affected by emergencies and helping to promote peace education. Complementarity will be sought with the education projects supported by AusAID and the World Bank/JBIC and with secondary education efforts supported by ADB and JBIC.

Child protection

32. Emphasis will be placed on several initiatives: establishing effective monitoring and feedback mechanisms for combating child-trafficking and sexual exploitation of children; improved policies for children in conflict with the law; creation of an additional 10,000 actively functioning *barangay* councils for the protection of children; and improved psychosocial care for victims of exploitation and abuse. In the multi-partner Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reintegration strategy, particularly for Mindanao, UNICEF will develop and lead actions to protect children caught up in armed conflict. Partnerships will be strengthened with other United Nations agencies such as ILO and UNDP and also with NGOs. Strengthened project models will combine preventive and early interventions with actions for rescue, recovery and reintegration, while promoting an improved legal protection and justice system for children. The passage of a comprehensive law on juvenile justice will be supported, and the programme will provide training and

equipment for video-conferencing facilities in approximately 45 family courts, which is half of the total. Approximately 15,000 at-risk children will be provided with education and vocational skills, and parents will be oriented in more effective parenting skills.

33. Key messages to promote a protective environment for children and young people at risk will be developed, with a focus on strengthening policy, capacity and partnerships. Services for psychosocial help and case management will be expanded through the training of approximately 6,000 field workers in life skills, including those aimed at promoting protection against HIV infection. Alternative family-care options for children without primary caregivers will be also piloted. Networking and alliances with local councils for the protection of children, faith-based organizations, NGOs, civil society organizations and relevant private sector partners will be strengthened. The National Council for the Welfare of Children and its regional sub-committees will monitor child protection structures and systems. Synergies will be pursued with ADB, ILO, Save the Children Fund-United Kingdom, Child Hope, Asia Acts, and World Vision as well as with major national NGOs, including the Educational Research and Development Assistance Foundation, the National Council for Social Development, and End Child Prostitution, Child Pornography and Trafficking of Children for Sexual Purposes (ECPAT) in the Philippines.

HIV/AIDS

34. The programme will focus on advocacy for prevention of an escalation of HIV/AIDS. The latest Youth and Adult Fertility study indicates that there exist behaviour patterns and conditions that could lead to a wide-scale epidemic. The programme will, therefore, address high-risk behaviour and the relatively low level of concern about HIV/AIDS at the national level. National campaigns to raise awareness about the disease will also focus on reaching communities, and especially adolescents, who will be encouraged to participate in prevention programmes. Rights-based actions will build on the child-friendly movement and its strong linkages with local government. Partnerships will be strengthened with concerned United Nations agencies, the Philippine National AIDS Council and the Department of Education. The programme will fully participate in multi-agency working groups, collaborating with them and others to improve monitoring and evaluation systems. The good relations of UNICEF with the private sector will be drawn on to raise awareness about HIV/AIDS and to strengthen collaboration with NGOs.

Cross-sectoral costs

35. These costs include support costs for supply and logistics operations and programme monitoring and evaluation functions. Security awareness and communication equipment will also be funded from this allocation. In addition, some funds will be retained to allow for rapid response in natural disasters and other emergencies.

Major partnerships

36. The Philippines UNDAF presents opportunities for strengthening partnerships within the United Nations system. Collaboration will continue with WHO on developing policies and technical standards in immunization and other areas.

Cooperation will be also be pursued with ADB, the World Bank and the JBIC, who fund large programmes. The child protection programme will harmonize with the ILO programme on elimination of the worst forms of child labour. Partnerships with NGOs will be strengthened to address, in particular, challenges related to child protection.

37. Fund-raising will entail strengthening partnerships with AusAID and other donors for programme development and field-level monitoring. Partnerships with the private sector will be continued for local fund-raising, especially for emerging issues such as prevention of child injury and improved school sanitation.

Monitoring, evaluation and programme management

38. The NEDA will coordinate the country programme through a National Steering Committee and an Executive Committee that includes the Council for the Welfare of Children (CWC) and UNICEF. The CWC will continue to monitor and coordinate the child-friendly movement. The National Steering Committee will meet twice annually and the Executive Committee will meet quarterly.

39. In programme monitoring, UNICEF will work with CWC and NEDA to improve systems developed in the previous programme. The NEDA regional offices will provide technical support to the focus provinces and will provide monitoring data. Goals-monitoring will use the *ChildInfo* knowledge centres. UNICEF will support surveys and other appropriate means to collect and analyse data on the situation of children, and this element of monitoring will be handled by the LPID. The database established in the knowledge centres will be updated regularly and will be used to prepare annual provincial and city reports on the situation of children and women.

40. Within UNICEF, the country management team will draw on support from sector staff and the three "island teams" engaged in inter-sectoral collaboration. Through the continued promotion of teamwork, UNICEF will aim to improve implementation and financial monitoring of the country programme to ensure impact, regular reporting and financial efficiency.